

## 2009 Weather Review

With Arizona's diverse topography, the State's temperatures range from the wintertime cold in the higher mountain areas to the searing summertime heat of the desert areas. Arizona's wide spectrum of climate and terrain support a remarkable agricultural diversity. Virtually all crops in Arizona are irrigated, meaning yield variability is less influenced by rainfall here than in the rain-dependent agricultural states. Weather conditions are still important to crop farmers in making planting and harvesting decisions. The highest recorded temperature in 2009 was 119 degrees at Bullhead City on July 28. Grand Canyon recorded the lowest temperature of 19 degrees below zero during the week ending December 13.

**January:** Temperatures across the State were mostly above normal. Precipitation in the form of rain or snow had fallen throughout the month. Small grain planting neared completion toward the end of the month. Range and pasture conditions continued to be mostly poor to good across the State.

**February:** Temperatures across the State were varied with above normal temperatures the first and last weeks. Precipitation in the form of rain or snow had fallen throughout the month. Crop conditions improved slightly for February. Durum wheat and barley emergence occurred on at least three quarters of the acreage. Range and pasture conditions improved to be mostly fair to good across the State. Alfalfa, winter vegetable, and citrus harvesting continued.

**March:** Temperatures across the State were mostly above normal for the month of March. Little to no precipitation fell throughout the month. Alfalfa condition remained mostly good to excellent. Small grain emergence was complete by the end of the month. Cotton planting was underway. Range and pasture conditions remained unchanged for most of the month despite lack of new rainfall. Alfalfa harvesting continued for Arizona. The winter vegetable harvest continued throughout March along with the citrus harvest.

**April:** Precipitation was below normal at all of the reporting stations by the end of the month. Temperatures were mostly above normal ranging from a high of 107 degrees to a low of 8 degrees. Cotton planting was almost 60 percent by the final week of the month and over 90 percent of the small grain acreage had headed. The winter vegetable harvest was wrapping up.

**May:** Range and pasture conditions remained the same as the previous month, very poor to fair. Small grain (barley and durum wheat) harvest began the third week. Miscellaneous melons, potatoes and dry onions were harvested. Temperatures were well above normal hitting a high of 109. By the end of the month all the reporting stations had below normal precipitation levels for the year to date.

**June:** Cotton squaring had occurred on 40 percent of the acreage and bolls had set on about a fourth of the acreage by the end of the month. Potato and melon harvesting continued. Temperatures were mostly below normal until late in the month when a high of 112 was recorded in Buckeye. Precipitation continued below normal significantly for most stations.

**July:** Small grain (barley and durum wheat) harvest was virtually complete by mid July. Cotton bolls had been set on 75 percent of the acreage by August 1. Melon harvest continued throughout July. Temperatures were above normal throughout the month reaching a high of 117 in Roll. Only one station had received above normal precipitation to date.

**August:** Cotton harvesting began during the last week of August. Melon harvesting remained active throughout the month. Temperatures were mostly above normal for the entire month. Temperatures were as high as 117 in Yuma.

**September:** Cotton harvesting continued around the State and was just over 20 percent complete by month's end. Melon harvesting continued active in a few areas. Temperatures remained above normal for the month. Temperatures hit 110 in three of the four weeks in Roll, Phoenix, and Paloma.

**October:** Mostly above normal temperatures occurred during October with a high of 110 degrees and a low of 8 degrees. Precipitation was slight with most falling above the Rim. Virtually all cotton bolls had opened by mid-month and harvesting was 50 percent complete by month's end

**November:** Temperatures were mostly above normal with a high of 98 degrees in Coolidge. Little to no rain fell during November. All of the weather stations have had below normal rain to date. Sheeping off occurred in the alfalfa regions around the State. Cotton harvest was 75 percent complete by the end of the month. The winter vegetable and citrus harvest began in early November.

**December:** By the end of the month, cotton harvest was nearing completion. The winter vegetable and citrus harvest continued in the desert southwest part of the State. Sheeping off was also active. Temperatures were mostly below normal throughout the month. The highest temperature was 78 degrees and the lowest was 19 degrees below zero.